

WO 2004/058013

PCT/GB2002/005942

- 8 -

CLAIMS

1. A foldable clothes hanger comprising two foldable arms (17,22) mounted pivotably on a common axis (8), each arm (17,22) having a part provided with a toothed arcuate rack (14,19) engaging a pinion (24,23) that is mounted pivotally on an adjacent parallel axis (9), **characterised in that** at least one of the arms (17,22) carries a generally arcuate limb provided with latch means (13,18), **and in that** the hanger comprises catch means (5,4) to engage with the latch means (13,18); means (3) to effect resilient engagement between the latch means (13,18) and the catch means (13,18), and release means (6,28) manually operable to counter the resilient engagement and permit disengagement of the latch means (13,18) and the catch means (5,4).

2. A foldable clothes hanger according to Claim 1, characterised in that each of the arms 17,22 carries a generally arcuate limb provided with latch means (13,18) engageable by catch means (5,4) and in that the means (3) to effect resilient engagement is common to the catch means (5,4) associated with both the arcuate limbs.

3. A foldable clothes hanger according to Claim 1 or Claim 2, characterised in that the catch means (5,4) are provided on an elongate arcuate strip (3) constituting the resilient means (3), and in that the release means (6,28) is operable to deflect the strip (3) such that the catch means (5,4) thereof moves out of engagement of the latch means (13,18).

4. A foldable clothes hanger according to Claim 3, characterised in that the release means (6,28) comprises a resiliently depressible pushbutton (28) engageable with a nodule (6) on the strip (3), depression of pushbutton (28) onto nodule (6) causing the strip (3) to deflect and effect disengagement of catch means (5,4) with latch means (13,18).

5. A foldable clothes hanger according to any preceding claim, wherein the arms (17,22) protrude from a housing (1,26) that encloses the toothed arcuate racks (14,19),

W/O 2004/058013

PCT/GB2002/005942

- 9 -

a hook (2) for the hanger being fast with, e.g. provided integrally with, the housing (1,26) and extending upwardly and outwardly therefrom.

- 5 6. A foldable clothes hanger according to Claim 5 characterised in that the housing (1,26) comprises a main part (1) moulded of plastics material with axle pins (8,9) to provide said common axis (8) and adjacent parallel axis (9), and further comprises a closure plate (26) snap-fit engageable with the main part (1) by engagement means (7,32;10-12,29,30).
- 10 7. A foldable clothes hanger according to Claim 6, characterised in that the closure plate 26 is moulded of plastics material with catches (33,34) to engage the free ends of the axle pins (8,9) and retain thereon the arms (17,22) and the pinions (23,24).
- 15 8. A foldable clothes hanger according to either of Claims 6 or 7 when dependent from Claim 3 or Claim 4, characterised in that the elongate arcuate strip (3) is moulded integrally with the main part (1) of the housing (1,26).
- 20 9. A foldable clothes hanger according to Claim 7 when dependent from Claim 4, characterised in that the pushbutton (28) is provided at end of a resilient strip moulded as part of the closure plate (26).
- 25 10. A foldable clothes hanger according to any one of the preceding Claims, characterised in that one of the latch means (13,18) and the catch means (5,4) is formed as a series of ratchet teeth and the other is formed as at least one projection to engage with said ratchet teeth.
- 30 11. A foldable clothes hanger according to any preceding claim characterised in that the part of one arm (22) provided with a toothed arcuate rack (19) is an arcuately extending limb that is concentric with and slidable over another arcuately extending limb projecting from the other arm (17).